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BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

Broadcast by Stations of the American Broadcasting Co.



S. Pat. Off.

What Kind of Farm Program Do We Need?

Moderator, GEORGE V. DENNY, Jr.

Speakers

WRIGHT PATMAN

ALLAN B. KLINE

(See also page 12)

COMING -

____ April 4, 1950 ____

Should We Cut Marshall Plan Aid Now?

____ April 11, 1950 ____

Do We Have an Alternative to the Cold War?

blished by THE TOWN HALL, Inc., New York 18, N. Y.



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THE BROADCAST OF MARCH 28: "What Kind of Farm Program Do We Need?"

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THE BROADCAST OF APRIL 4: "Should We Cut Marshall Plan Aid Now?"

THE BROADCAST OF APRIL 11: "Do We Have an Alternative to the Cold War?"

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Town Meeting

BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR GEORGE V. DENNY, JR., MODERATOR



ARCH 28, 1950

VOL. 15, No. 48

hat Kind of Farm Program Do We Need?

mouncer:

Your Town Meeting comes to you tonight from Robertson emorial Field House on the campus of Bradley University at oria, Illinois. The citizens of Peoria and surrounding commuies in central Illinois tonight are concerned with two major ttles, one of which will be fought just an hour from now when adley meets City College of New York for the basketball empionship of the Nation in Madison Square Garden.

They are also deeply interested in the verbal battle which will e place in the meantime on Town Meeting when Congressman ight Patman and Allan Kline lock horns on the question of m subsidies and prices—a topic of vital importance to every erican.

'wo great Peoria institutions, Bradley University and the zens Forum, are our hosts. Coöperating with them are the erpillar Tractor Company and the Keystone Steel and Wire mpany, two nationally famous Peoria industries which sponsor vn Meeting on Station WIRL.

low to preside over our discussion here is your Moderator, president of Town Hall, and founder of America's Town

eting, George V. Denny, Jr. Mr. Denny. (Applause)

derator Denny:

good evening, neighbors. Tonight we salute our hosts, the ria Citizens Forum and Bradley University, whose whirlwind cetball team will take the floor at Madison Square Garden in York City just one hour from now to compete with City ege of New York for the basketball championship of the on. We are holding forth tonight in Bradley's great Field House with a representative audience of more than 7,000 peopfrom all parts of central Illinois.

As much as our subject concerns the people of Illinois and t Middle West, it is a vital matter to Americans everywhere as people of other lands, for we are trying to work out a farm prograhere that will be fair to farmers and consumers, alike.

Congressman Patman believes in the Brannan Plan, while M Kline strongly opposes it in favor of the present plan under while we are now operating. Your Moderator is going to leave to the speakers the task of interpreting these plans, which are not exactly simple.

We'll hear first from the Democratic Congressman from Texaskana, Texas, who has represented his District in Congress evisince 1928. He's a member of the House Banking and Current Committee, the House Small Business Committee, and the Joi Committee on the Economic Report. Congressman Wright Paman of Texas. (Applause)

Congressman Patman:

It is a real privilege for a Democrat from East Texas to participate in this great democratic institution, the Town Hall of the A We believe in democracy in the great Gulf Southwest.

We believe that family farmers working diligently on the farms are fundamentally important to national prosperity at the preservation of democracy.

We believe that farm programs should be designed for working farmers on family farms.

We favor a continuation of our historic national policy.

We favor a continuation of our historic national policy encourage and assist true farmer coöperatives.

We need to expand our efforts to conserve our soils.

We need to expand and extend programs that meet the probler of low-income farm families.

We need to encourage decentralization of industry, and we need an expanding economy.

Our working farmers want an opportunity to earn a fair incomin return for their abundant production. Present price-suppolegislation is inadequate for this purpose. That's why they favothe immediate enactment of the recommendations made to Congress by Secretary of Agriculture Brannan, as spokesman for the Administration. I shall discuss these recommendations briefly.

The old commodity price formula advocated by Mr. Kline outmoded. Current needs of the Nation require a new basis for fixing a farm income goal to use in determining price-suppolevels. Definite support prices should be extended to hogs, cattled.

nilk, butterfat, eggs, chickens, grain sorghums, and other feed trains, in addition to the commodities that are already supported.

Under the present program, the Government buys up enough of hese commodities to keep the market price at the support level. Then it transports them to various caves and warehouses, pays he freight, puts them in storage and pays the storage costs, and o top it off, most of these stored, perishable commodities will ventually spoil.

This sort of thing, if it is continued very long, will endanger he public support for a continuation of the entire farm program. Production payments are the only workable method of supporting the important perishables on that list. Production payments hould be authorized by legislation. The entire supply of the commodity would be allowed to flow through the regular channels if trade at the normal supply and demand prices. If the market rice were less than the support level, the difference would be said in a direct payment to the farmers.

Production payments would cost less tax dollars. They would eep the Government out of the food and seed business. Production payments will eliminate the accumulation of government-held urpluses. American consumers would get the benefits of our particultural abundance.

Production payments are a sure way of getting price support treetly to the working farmer for whom the program was esigned.

It is the family-sized farm—not the big, industrialized, absentee-wned farming enterprise—that is the very backbone of our iral community. It is the family-sized farm that supports our iral business, our rural banks, our rural newspapers. It's the mily farm that supports our rural schools and rural churches. IFederal funds should not be used to increase the number and se size of industrialized, factory-type farm enterprises.

What public purpose, Mr. Kline, is to be gained from using Heral funds to pay a half-million dollar potato subsidy to a oston banker, who happens to own land in Maine? To be exact, a payment was \$576,000 in one year.

These big operators also want support prices to slide down the ding scale until the family farmers are bankrupt. Then Big siness landowners can buy up the farm lands at depression ces.

is factory-farm thinking behind the opposition to democratily adopted production adjustment measures?

Working farmers operate 98 per cent of all of our farms. They led and the best interest of the Nation demands the immediate

enactment of the Administration's farm price-support proposal that have come to be called the Brannan Plan. (Applause)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Congressman Patman. Our next speaker is now serving his fourth term as president of the American Farm Bureau Federation. Mr. Kline was born in Dixon County, Nebraska, bu started farming in Benton County, Iowa, after his graduation from Iowa State College in 1920, and now, with his oldest son, is still operating this farm. He's a member of several international agricultural boards, and is a member of the executive committee of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers.

We are happy to welcome to Town Meeting, Mr. Allan Kline (Applause)

Mr. Kline:

Thank you, Mr. Denny. I am a little troubled by the fact tha Mr. Patman seems to think that we've gotten into difficulty with some of these regimentations and controls, and that the way to get out is to have some more regimentation and some more control.

As a matter of fact, we in the American Farm Bureau Federatior are family-sized farmers. There are 1,409,000 of us—a cross section of America, a thoroughly democratic organization.

They get together each year. They decide what they are for and because they know that they are a minority group in this country, they have a very strong respect for the public welfare as they work out agricultural policies, and certainly a very strong consideration for the family-sized farm operator because that's who they are.

We know that the foundation for prosperity in American agriculture is not primarily concerned with a guarantee by Government of price, in the first place. The most important single factor is high production per man, and a well-distributed real income in the rest of the economy. That's where most of the people are. Those are our customers, in the first place; and, in the second place, they produce our real wages.

We no longer live in this agriculture of ours on what we produce. We live on what we can buy with what we get for what we produce. It's a different sort of an economy, in which we live.

The second point I should like to make is a corollary of the first. It is that a high standard of living in agriculture depends absolutely upon the farmers' earning it. It depends upon high production per man in agriculture.

In the past, we have worked sincerely on this proposition, and in my time a very great deal of progress has been made. It has been made through the extension of education, through the improvement of techniques of soil management, and what have you.

You say, "Where then does the farm program come in?" It comes in a free-choice economy like ours, because in that economy farm prices go up and down very rapidly. Farm costs go up rather slowly, and they just don't come down. That leaves the farmer in a very bad situation.

What we try to do with this program is to fit a protective mechanism into it so that commercial agriculture can survive in such a way that the farmer can hope to get a minimum, but can also fit into a dynamic sort of an agriculture and a dynamic sort of America.

This other proposal suggests we take prices which are already somewhat too low, force them down by woefully glutting the market, and leave the farmer hanging on the precarious possibility of getting annually from Congress an appropriation to make up the difference between this price, which obviously he can't live on, and this supposedly guaranteed price.

We say that's no place to get a great segment of America, that it is not the way in which America has made herself great, that it has no relationship to the kind of productive enterprise which has led all the world to the doors of America to see how we got it one in agriculture and out of it. (Applause)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Mr. Kline. Now before we take the questions from his audience, I'm going to give the speakers a chance to ask questions of each other. We'll start with Congressman Patman, who may have a question for Mr. Kline.

Congressman Patman: I'd like to ask Mr. Kline a question. The 3rannan Plan will take care of the present situation, which is candalous, concerning potatoes and eggs and dairy products. The american people will not stand for such performances very long.

Now I'd like to know, Mr. Kline, since the American people nust pay two ways—one in taxes now and one in increased prices t the market place in competition with the Government—what is plan is. We must do something, so I'd like to ask Mr. Kline that his plan is to stop this scandalous situation.

Mr. Kline: Well, it's hard to handle all these commodities tonce. Let's pick one out. Eggs are one of the mandatory support commodities under the Brannan Plan. The level of supports is

46 cents a dozen. The level of supports last year was 35 to 37. The present level of supports is 25 to 27.

Just how does the consumer think he's going to get cheaper eggs, if he pays the farmer a guaranteed price 20 cents higher than the present price, makes up the difference plus the cost of administration, seeing that every one of the over four million producers of eggs gets an appropriate check, and only one payment, for each egg, to be sure it wasn't sold once and rebought and sold again, and pay all that difference plus the cost of administration, and get cheap eggs?

Now it's a much better way to get cheap eggs to encourage the efficiencies of production, and to encourage the market system in America.

The same thing would apply to potatoes, because, under the program in potatoes, the level of price support attached to the program as it was presented to Congress was \$1.59. The present level of supports is \$1.01. It is the same question. (*Applause*)

Mr. Denny: Congressman Patman, would you care to comment on that?

Congressman Patman: It is possible, under the Brannan Plan, that no payment would be required at all. It's possible that the prices would be high enough. It will certainly be fairer to have one payment under the Brannan Plan than the present plan which has two payments. The taxpayers pay in order to keep the prices up. Then the taxpayers, when they go to the market place, are in competition with the Government again, and pay a higher price. So obviously the Brannan Plan will cost less than the present farm program. (Applause)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Mr. Kline, your question.

Mr. Kline: Well, I might just as well follow this with a question for Mr. Patman, and ask him to explain just how he thinks that the consumer would get cheaper eggs if the price were supported at 46 cents and you paid the cost of administration, than you would with the present program. He says the price could be higher. I'd like to know how he thinks it would get higher, if you produced more eggs.

I'd also like to have him discuss the possibility of the farmer getting the difference between, say, 15 cents in the market place and 45 cents from the Government from an appropriation from Congress. (Applause)

Mr. Denny: Congressman Patman?

Congressman Patman: The price evidently will seek its level in the market place. As I said before it's possible there will be no difference, and the Government will not be out any money. But if the Government is out any money, it's just one payment that the Government will make. The taxpayers will not have to make two payments.

I ask Mr. Kline again to present his plan. Mr. Brannan has courageously presented a good plan. If a better plan is offered, I'm sure Mr. Brannan would accept it. I will. So I ask Mr. Kline again to present the plan that he has to answer this scandalous situation of potatoes and eggs and dairy products. (Applause)

Mr. Denny: Any further comment, Mr. Kline, before we get to the rest of the questions? Now, while we get ready for our question period, here is a message for our Town Meeting listeners.

Announcer: Before an audience of 9,000 people in the Field House of Bradley University at Peoria, Illinois, we are presenting America's Town Meeting, the Nation's favorite radio forum.

Our question is, "What Kind of Farm Program Do We Need?" and our speakers are Congressman Wright Patman of Texas and Allan B. Kline, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

You may obtain a copy of tonight's discussion and the next ten issues of the Town Meeting Bulletin by sending one dollar to ITown Hall, New York 18, New York. If you want to keep better informed on current affairs, why not subscribe now to make sure you receive copies of these meetings every week, even though you may miss hearing some of the broadcasts.

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Now for our question period we return you to Mr. Denny.

QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

Mr. Denny: We start with a question from the gentleman over

here on the right.

Man: Congressman Wright Patman. Why is the Government reverting to the practices used under the now unconstitutional Federal Farm Board and Agriculture Adjustment Act, only under a different title?

Mr. Denny: Congressman Patman?

Congressman Patman: I didn't get the question.

Mr. Denny: Will you repeat it, please?

Man: Why is the Government reverting to the practices used under the now unconstitutional Federal Farm Board and Agricultural Adjustment Act?

Congressman Patman: I get your question. The present program is constitutional. The program contemplated by Mr. Brannan and advocated by him is constitutional. The farmers are entitled to

this protection.

The first Congress met in 1789. The first general law passed by an American Congress that year, and signed July 4, 1789, by President George Washington, was a protective tariff measure, and we've had protective tariff ever since, and the farmers are entitled to some relief by reason of that.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Next question. Man: The Honorable Senator, please.

Mr. Denny: What's that?

 ${\it Man}$: The Honorable Representative, I want to talk to him, Mr. Patman.

Mr. Denny: No, I had a question for Mr. Kline here. You've got a Number 2 card there. All right, take a question right here.

Man: I'm a dairy manufacturer. My question is: The Government bought only Premium 93 score butter, and placed it in storage to become rancid, and refused lower grade 89 score. Why?

Mr. Kline: I can't answer for the Government. I will say, as a farmer, that any program which denies the consumer high quality commodities at a fair price ought to have something done about it, and any proposition which collects the good food and makes the consumer use the poor ones is certainly a bad program, or else it is very badly administered—one of the two. (Applause)

Mr. Denny: Congressman Patman, have you a comment? I

thought you wanted to comment.

Congressman Patman: About the butter?

Mr. Denny: Yes.

Congressman Patman: No, of course, I agree with Mr. Kline that we shouldn't have that. With the Brannan Plan, we would not have it. We would have the law of supply and demand. The Government would not handle the product. It would not transport it. It would not store it. It would go through the regular channels of distribution. The people would get the very best product for their money. We'd have none of this putting it into caves and having it ruined.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Now a question from this gentleman here.

Man: Regardless of the kind of program, what can farmers do with respect to changing their types of production to reduce surpluses, and can this be related to human diet and soil conservation?

Mr. Denny: Hear that, Mr. Kline?

Mr. Kline: I think so. I think the question was what can farmers do to increase products which are suitable for human diets, and improve soil conservation.

That's a question which we deal with all the time. We are very, very deeply concerned in evolving the kind of program which its dietary needs. There is very great opportunity for improving viets, and doing an extraordinary something or other to this matter of so-called surplus production.

An improvement in diet by the use of animal products, for instance, which would have increased by five per cent the per capita consumption over the past 20 years would have eliminated the grain surplus. There's real hope in that direction.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Now the gentleman here on this platform.

Man: Representative Patman. As long as we have a program, why do we farmers who try to farm with the best practices in liversified farming have to take the same corn cut as those who ust "corn-bean" every year?

Congressman Patman: I don't know the details of the program, ut I know this: The farmers need a farm program; the public eeds it. We cannot have a prosperous country unless we have a rosperous agriculture.

One thing sure, we have a very high national debt. That national ebt can be paid in honest dollars, if we maintain good farm prices and good wages. We must have a good farm program. (Applause) Mr. Denny: Thank you. Mr. Kline, a comment on that?

Mr. Kline: I'd like to say very briefly that the present program designed to fit into good soil management practices. It ought to better designed. There's a lot that can be done under the liministration of it the way it is. The soil is not only a resource

for farmers, it's a national resource. Any program ought to be designed to that end.

Congressman Patman: And the Brannan Plan will encourage

soil conservation.

Mr. Kline: I'm not so sure of that. (Applause)

Mr. Denny: I hope the radio audience got those two asides. All right, the gentleman over there.

Man: Mr. Patman. Why does our present Administration advocate lower prices when our present Government Control Program is costing the housewives today at least one dollar per hundred more for potatoes?

Congressman Patman: I don't know that you're correct about

THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

WRIGHT PATMAN — Democratic Congressman from Texas, Wright Patman is a member of the House Banking and Currency Committee and the Small Business Committee. He is also a member of the Joint Committee on the Economic Report, and co-author

of the Robinson-Patman Act.

Born near Hughes Springs, Texas, in 1893, Congressman Patman received his law degree from Cumberland University in 1916. Admitted to the Texas bar in 1916, he began his practice of law at Hughes Springs. The same year, he was assistant county attorney of Cass County, Texas. From 1924 to 1929, he was district attorney for the 5th Judicial District of Texas. From 1921 to 1924, he was a member of the Texas House of Representatives. Since 1929, he has been a member of the U. S. Congress serving the First Texas District.

During World War I, Congressman Patman was a machine gun

officer.

ALLAN BLAIR KLINE—Mr. Kline is president of the American Farm Bureau Federation. Born in Waterbury, Nebraska, in 1895, he has an A.B. degree from Morningside College of Sioux City, Iowa, and a B.S. degree from Iowa State College. For many years an operator of a farm in Benton County, Iowa, he has also been president of the Iowa Life Insurance Company, the Iowa Farm Mutual Insurance Company, the Iowa Farm Serum Company, and the Iowa Plant Food Company.

Mr. Kline served as president of the Benton County Farm Bureau from 1928 to 1937, and of the Iowa Farm Bureau, from 1944 to 1947. He has been president of the Business Service Association since 1944. From 1936 to 1943, he was vice president of the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation. In 1945, he became a director of the American Farm Bureau and has been president since 1947.

Mr. Kline is director of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, and a member of the Public Advisory Board of the Economic Coöperation Administration. During World War I, he was a sergeant in the medical corps. He received the Master Farmer Award in 1937.

the price of the potatoes. The Government is not advocating lower prices except the lowest consistent with a fair price to the farmer. That's what the Government is advocating. We're not advocating—the Government is not—having these potatoes ruined, and all these other products we have been talking about. We want human beings to consume them. Under the Brannan Plan, they will be consumed by human beings, and not wasted.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Now the gentleman over here on my eft.

Man: To Congressman Patman. I believe we need a farm program, but I think that we all agree that it should be based on soil conservation. I want to know why it isn't based on a bushelage rather than on acreage?

Congressman Patman: Well, you have raised a question there hat I cannot answer. There are lots of problems involved in asing it on a bushel basis. We have plenty of problems; that's one of them.

Mr. Denny: Mr. Kline, do you care to comment on that?

Mr. Kline: I think not; that's too complicated.

Mr. Denny: No, he says it's too complicated, too. All right, the entleman over here on the right.

Man: I'd like to direct a question to Mr. Kline. He has made very strong case for the participation of the farmer, and cerainly that is how it should be in a democracy. Individual parcipation depends largely on education, and certainly on the aformation that is got to the people who are going to participate.

Mr. Denny: Is that twenty-five words? (Laughter)

Man: Well, could we get the Farm Bureau out of education, and
≥ave it to the Extension Service that is set up by the Government?

Mr. Denny: Mr. Kline?

Mr. Kline: I think that's possibly a little bit loaded question, ut let me say this in answer to it. As far as I am personally conerned—and I'm sure it's consistent with the attitude of most Farm ureau members—if we were to pick out the one thing which in the past 50 years has made the greatest contribution, both to priculture and standards of living of farmers and to the ability is consumers in America to buy food cheap—and it is cheap in the merica—I would just pick out education. That is the thing.

Now it has worked out differently in different states. I make no bology for the Extension Service, because if I were to pick out to one thing in America in education which has made the most intribution to this, I would have to pick out the combination of the Experiment Stations, of the resident teaching, and the Extension Service of the Land-Grant College System. (Applause)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The gentleman way over there on the right.

Man: Congressman Patman. If we subsidize the farmer, why not subsidize the miner?

Congressman Patman: The Government has inaugurated many subsidies. Number 1, the protective tariff, I mentioned a while ago. Number 2, railroad subsidies. Number 3, airmail subsidies. Number 4, subsidies amounting to tens of millions of dollars to periodicals every year.

So the question of a subsidy is not new. It is necessary that the Government keep the farmers prosperous in order to have a prosperous Nation. One depends upon the other.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Mr. Kline?

Mr. Kline: There is a very considerable subsidy, of course, in the social security programs operated by the Government in which miners participate.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The lady there in the center. Yes?

Lady: Congressman Patman. Have you any actual figures on the per capita cost to the taxpayer of the Brannan Plan?

Congressman Patman: No one knows what it will cost. No one knows what the present plan will cost next year. No one knows that. We do know—at least, we believe we know—that it will cost less than the present program. Now, there are lots of bugs in the present program, and I've mentioned those bugs to you—the objections that should be corrected.

I've asked Mr. Kline time and again what his plan is to correct them. Mr. Kline hasn't told you that plan yet. I hope he does.

Mr. Denny: Here's Mr. Kline now. Mr. Kline?

Mr. Kline: I want to confine my remarks to this matter of cost. There has been quite a lot of work done on it. I haven't found any authority who doesn't agree that the Brannan Plan would not cost less, but would cost very, very much more indeed—a multibillion dollar program annually. You just take any commodity, and that's the way it works out. The best figures I can get on milk, alone, would be that it would cost at least a billion and a quarter dollars a year—for milk alone.

Congressman Patman: Mr. Kline, I don't want that figure thrown out into air, you know. There's nothing to that at all. You could have said two and a half billion dollars. The fact is, it will cost less, because the consumers will get the benefit of it, and they won't have to pay in taxes to make up for the loss.

Mr. Kline: They sure will. (Applause)

Mr. Denny: Mr. Kline, so that this audience doesn't leave us

ithout knowing what plan you support—as I understand it, you support the present plan, do you not?

Mr. Kline: Well, we certainly don't say that the present plan perfect. As a matter of fact, it is based on experience. It's based the idea that there ought to be this protective device. But we urselves would be the first to suggest that, on the basis of operience, we had better correct it, we had better improve it, e had better do away with some of the difficulties involved, but



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above all, we had better keep an approach to this proposition consistent with the philosophy of a free-choice system, where people do as they think best, get all they can for what they do and do as they please with what they get. (Applause)

Mr. Denny: All right, sir. Thank you, very much, Congressman Patman and Mr. Kline. I also want to extend our warm thanks to our hosts, the Peoria Civic Forum, Bradley University, and our local sponsors, the Caterpillar Tractor Company, and the Keystone Steel and Wire Company, and Station WIRL.

We're especially grateful to Mr. S. Belfer, chairman of the Hos-Committee, and Mr. L. J. Fletcher, for their outstanding contribution to make this program such a great success.

Now in just a moment I'll tell you about our subject and speakers for next week.

Announcer: Perhaps you know how you feel about the important public issues of the day, but do you know the other side? You must know both sides in order to reach a sound judgment. That what makes democracy work. Out of these Town Meetings, which present both sides, come tolerance, understanding, reason, and new knowledge. Those are the reasons why local business firms institutions, and organizations sponsor Town Meeting on their own ABC stations throughout the country.

Here in Peoria our local sponsors are the Caterpillar Tractor Company and the Keystone Steel and Wire Company. Town Meeting is available for local sponsorship on the station to which you are now listening. If you want to expand your public service and, at the same time, have an effective advertising medium, callyour ABC station manager for further details about the local sponsorship of Town Meeting.

Now to tell you about next week's program, here is Mr. Denny Mr. Denny: Next week from Richmond, Virginia, the hard working Administrator of ECA, Mr. Paul Hoffman will be out principal speaker, and will be interrogated by Mr. Philip I Warden of the Chicago Tribune and Blair Moody of the Detros News. Our subject will be, "Should We Cut Marshall Plan Ai Now?"

Copies of tonight's Town Meeting, and all Town Meetings, will be found in our Town Meeting Bulletin which you may receive regularly for 11 weeks by sending one dollar to Town Hall, New York 18, New York, or for a full year for \$4.50. Single copies are ten cents each.

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